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Hospital Bag & Birth Day Checklist

The things moms say they were glad they packed (and wish they had). Pack by week 36.

Papers and plans

- [ ] Photo ID, insurance card and hospital pre-registration papers
- [ ] Two printed copies of your birth preferences (one for the nurses' station)
- [ ] Your pediatrician's name and phone number
- [ ] List of your medicines, allergies and your provider's after-hours number
- [ ] Cash or a card for parking, vending machines and the cafeteria

Hair and skin care

- [ ] Satin bonnet, scarf or pillowcase
- [ ] Your own shampoo, conditioner, leave-in and edge brush
- [ ] Dry shampoo or a quick protective style plan
- [ ] Shea butter, cocoa butter or your favorite lotion
- [ ] Your own toothbrush, face wash and deodorant

For baby

- [ ] Car seat installed and inspected before your due date
- [ ] Two going-home outfits in newborn and 0 to 3 months sizes
- [ ] Hat, socks and scratch mittens
- [ ] Swaddle blanket and a weather-ready blanket for the car ride
- [ ] A few diapers and wipes for the ride home

Comfort for labor

- [ ] Phone, charger and a 10-foot cord (outlets are never by the bed)
- [ ] Your own pillow in a bright pillowcase so it doesn't get mixed up
- [ ] Socks with grips, a robe and slides for the shower
- [ ] Lip balm (hospital air is very dry)
- [ ] Refillable water bottle with a straw
- [ ] Playlist, headphones or a small speaker
- [ ] Eye mask and earplugs for resting between checks

For after delivery

- [ ] Two button-front or nursing pajamas
- [ ] Nursing bras and breast pads
- [ ] Nipple cream
- [ ] High-waisted disposable or mesh underwear
- [ ] Overnight maxi pads (the hospital gives some, bring backups)
- [ ] Dark towel and comfortable going-home outfit (think 6 months pregnant size)
- [ ] Nursing pillow if you plan to breastfeed
- [ ] Ask your provider about a stool softener

For your support person

- [ ] Snacks for both of you (labor can be long)
- [ ] Change of clothes, toiletries and phone charger
- [ ] Pillow and light blanket
- [ ] List of people to call or text after the birth
- [ ] Know your birth preferences so they can speak up for you

Big feelings are normal

- [ ] Baby blues can bring tears and mood swings in the first two weeks
- [ ] If sadness, worry or numbness lasts longer or feels heavy, tell your provider
- [ ] Ask a partner or friend to check in with you every day
- [ ] You deserve care too. Rest whenever someone else can hold the baby

My birth team

Doctor or midwife: _____

Hospital: _____

Doula: _____

Pediatrician: _____

Support person: _____

Questions to ask your care team

- [ ] Can we do skin-to-skin right after birth?
- [ ] Can we delay cord clamping?
- [ ] When will a lactation consultant visit?
- [ ] Can my doula or support person stay with me the whole time?

Ready at home

- [ ] Safe sleep space set up: a crib or bassinet with a firm, flat mattress and nothing else in it
- [ ] Baby's first pediatrician visit booked (usually 3 to 5 days after birth)
- [ ] Freezer meals or a meal train scheduled
- [ ] A helper lined up for the first two weeks
- [ ] Postpartum care kit by the toilet: peri bottle, pads, witch hazel pads
- [ ] Your own 6-week postpartum checkup on the calendar (ask for an earlier visit at 2 to 3 weeks)

Speak up! Call 911 or tell your nurse right away, during pregnancy or up to a year after birth, if you have a severe headache that won't go away, vision changes, trouble breathing, chest pain, heavy bleeding, a fever or thoughts of harming yourself or your baby. Say "I recently had a baby" and ask that your concern be noted in your chart. You know your body.